Employment under J.R.Y.

657. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS & EM PLOYMENT be pleased to State:

(a) the number of persons provided employment under Jawahar Rojgar Yoja na in the country, particularly in Punjab, as on 30th October,' 1996;

(b) whether Government have formulated any national scheme to eliminate the increasing unemployment in backward areas in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) Physical Performance has been maintained in terms of number of mandays generated and not in the number of persons provided employment under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. Upto September, 1996, 1378.25 lakh mandays have been generated in the country under JRY in the current financial.year. Punjab State has not furnished any performance report for the current financial year so far.

(b) to (d) For providing employment in backward areas in the country, Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched from 2nd October, 1993 in all RPDs blocks of the country. Latter on it was extended to DPAP/DDP/MADA and other backward blocks of the country. From the current financial year EAS is being extended to all blocks of the country to be covered in two phases including all the blocks of Punjab State w.e.f. 1996-97.

Incidence of Tuberculosis and Asthama among employees of Thermal Power Stations

658. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention h'as been drawn to the growing incidence of Tuberculosis and Asthama among employees of thermal power stations due to pollution caused by coal ash, noise and unclean environmental premises;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any survey/study to assess the number of employees so affected in various theremal power stations across the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to check this hazard in the thermal power stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (d) Government has not received any report indicating the growing incidence of Tuberculosis and-Asthma among the employees of Thermal Power Stations due to pollution caused by coal ash.

Environmental guidelines for Thermal Power Plants inter alia provide that proper and adequate precautionary measures should be taken:

(i) To check the emission of dust from coal handling areas; workers engaged in the coal handling operations should be medically examined regularly for lung diseases; personal protection equipment such as dust masks, respirators, helmets, face shields etc. should be provided to the workers;

(ii) To control the level of noise below 85 dB (decible), workers are required to wear ear-plugs or ear-muffs for their protection.

(iii) Proper house keeping and cleanliness should be maintained, both inside and outside plant,